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WHOSE UNHOLY HANDS ON WHAT?

A Review Article

Maurice A. Robinson

Jay P. Green, Sr., ed. *Unholy Hands on the Bible, Vol. 1: An Introduction to Textual Criticism, including the Complete Works of John W. Burgon, Dean of Chichester*. Lafayette, IN: Sovereign Grace Trust Fund, 1990. \$24.95.

All who are interested in New Testament textual criticism and the principles of a Byzantine-priority theory (also called the "Majority" or "Traditional Text" theory) should eagerly welcome a reprinting of Burgon's several works on the New Testament text. Even those who do not hold to such a theory owe it to themselves in the name of scholarly inquiry to examine carefully what Burgon has stated before drawing final conclusions. Jay Green's 1959 reprint of Burgon's *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark* and Conservative Classics' 1979 reprint of Burgon's *The Revision Revised* marked the initial steps in this desired direction; but until now Burgon's "meatier" works, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established* and *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* have not been available in reprinted book form. It has been to Dr. D. A. Waite's credit that his Dean Burgon Society has made those works available in bound photocopies for a number of years, albeit at a higher total price than the present volume.

Green's edition is well-bound and the print quality is excellent throughout. Burgon's works have been re-typeset in a form which allows a greater amount of material to be included in fewer pages than the original nineteenth-century editions, which generously wasted much space. Pagination is not continuous, however, but each segment of Burgon receives a separate pagination (pp. 1-142, followed by B1-B103, up through H1-H12; Green's own "Foreword and Introduction" section is numbered pp. 1-38, causing page-confusion with Burgon's first section, which should have been A1-A142). All pages should simply have been numbered consecutively throughout, with the various books of Burgon placed chronologically, rather than in a scattered format (more on which below).

The newly-typeset format is marred too often by exact photo-reproduction of pages in whole or part from Burgon's original editions, interspersed with the new font (pp. 45-64, 73-74, 79-80, 88, 120-121, 130, 139-142, B31, B53, B71-B72, B99-B100, C37, C101-C102, C139-C177, E27). If the bulk of Burgon's works is assiduously re-typeset, including many intricate passages where Greek and English appear in quantity, it is difficult to understand why so many portions were not equally retyped. The only explanation seems to be a rush to publication, and this is the key to understanding the many other problems associated with what should otherwise have been an eagerly-desired book.

There are three main factors which force this reviewer not to recommend the present book under any circumstances. That this severe judgment is justified will be seen in the comments to follow. It is a grievous disappointment that this has to be the case, since it is so essential that Burgon's works be placed before a modern public who have no idea of his text-critical position save that which critics allege to him. But there is no choice: the volume fails utterly because of its multifarious typesetting errors, its thoroughgoing revision by the present editor, and in that editor's introductory invective, which clouds the entire tone of what Burgon actually desired to say. Each of these points will now be taken up in that order, with clear examples provided.

I. Typesetting errors

Nothing mars a book more than typesetting errors. To this all should agree. Yet readers will find errors in almost any book or article (including this one); but they simply overlook these since they are usually transparent, as well as few and far between. In the Burgon volume, however, the typesetting errors easily number in the high hundreds and perhaps in the thousands, based upon a rough estimate from randomly selected portions throughout the book. These errors so detract from the presentation that the reader will concentrate more on resolving them than to dedicating his time in study of what Burgon actually has to say. Examples of such errors are the following (not a complete list even on the pages mentioned; examples can be multiplied easily):

- Foreword and Introduction: p. 37, par. 2 *The Causes of Corruption of the New Testament Text* [Burgon's book title] should be *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*
- p. 37, par. 2 *The Causes of Corruption* should be *The Causes of the Corruption*
- p. 37, par. 3 Burgon's "Appendix F" to his *Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark* is omitted (see pp. C172-C173), even though listed on the Contents page. The text here mentions the omission of only one Appendix ("G"), which itself still would have been pertinent to a main point of Burgon.
- p. 37, par. 3 "God Manifest . . ." [Essay title by Burgon] should be "God Was Manifest . . ."
- p. 37, pars. 3,4 *The Revised Version* (three times!) should be *The Revision Revised* [Title of Burgon's book]
- p. 39, title *The Traditional Text of the New Testament* [Burgon's book title] should be *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established*
- p. 143, title *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Gospels* [Burgon's book title] should be *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*
- p. 4, line 6 from end **purile** should be **puerile**
- p. 5, line 16 from end **minutae** should be **minutiae**
- p. 13, line 12 **Apolinarius** should be **Apollinarius**
- p. 13, line 14 **varius** should be **various**
- p. 17, line 4 **Smyria** should be **Smyrna**
- p. 18, line 6 **on this them** should be **on this theme**

p. 18, line 17 from end **Quizote** should be **Quixote**

Traditional Text:

p. 1, par.3, line 3 **thost** should be **those**
p. 2, line 15 **authographs** should be **autographs**
p. 3, line 9 **Authographs** should be **Autographs**
p. 3, line 10 **predominence** should be **predominance**
p. 34, line 8 from end "Pray, what in this instance are them?" should be "Pray,
what in this instance are they?"

The Causes of the Corruption:

p. H2, par. 2, lines 2-3 Text reads **In order** (next line) **other** (next line) **words**,
leaving almost a complete line blank.

A major error occurs in *The Traditional Text*, p. 3, par. 3, line 3, where Miller is made to state that Burgon would have revised the Textus Receptus of Matthew alone with "about 550 corrections" when the original read "about 150 corrections." This leaves the reader with a gross misapprehension of the reliability of the Byzantine text as reflected in both the TR and the common English Version, and makes it appear as though Burgon would revise the TR far more than present-day Majority Text supporters. In fact each would advocate almost identical levels of revision applied to the same passages (see Burgon's *Textual Commentary* to Matthew 1-14 – not contained in the present volume – for specific examples).

Worse still, on pp. 22-26, where Burgon presents a full discussion of each of his seven notes of truth – the key to his text-critical system and of vital importance – a serious error of omission occurs on p.23 (signaled by a repetition in lines 15 and 14 from the end which duplicates the first two lines of the preceding paragraph). This results in an omission from the end of Burgon's principle #1, through his principles #2 and #3, into the beginning of principle #4 – 11 pages of matter from the original edition! This omission, signaled as it is by the repetition, glares at the reader and should never have been missed in final proofing. This further suggests the haste in which this volume was unfortunately brought into print.

Greek words fare little better. There are so many typesetting errors in this regard that it virtually takes a textual critic to restore the Greek cited by Burgon as presented in this volume. A prime example of this point is p. 109, where the following Greek words (here transliterated for clarity) are all misspelled on the same page (accents and breathings are not here shown, but also have their share of errors):

panttws should be **pantws**
oan should be **otan**
plothtos should be **ploutos**
epiphdwtos should be **epiphdwntos**
auois should be **autois**

On the same page also, a short quotation containing some of the above words is destroyed, due to the common scribal error of haplography (omission by skipping from a word to another which appears similar):

. . . besides the reference to death, **apopesountai pantws ths oikonomias, epiphdwntos auois h epigeios ekleipoi zwh**, which clearly reverses . . .

The original text of Burgon reads as follows (with omitted portions underlined>):

. . . besides the reference to death, **apopesountai pantws ths oikonomias, epiphdwntos autois tou thanatou** (lines 21-3), we are presented with **otan autous h epigeios ekleipoi zwh**, which clearly reverses . . .

The portion from **autoiv** to **autouv** was omitted, due to the eye of the editor having skipped the intervening words as he looked to and from his exemplar. This type of error is understandable in ancient handwritten manuscripts, but in a modern and theoretically well-proofed book it appears shoddy.

A cursory examination reveals other examples of Greek misspellings, which also could be greatly multiplied:

p. 111, line 22 from end	deudte should be deute
p. 129, line 20 from end	ei mu should be ei mh
p. 137, line 20	Thiou should be Uiou
p. B6, lines 7-8 from end	ouw and ouwv should be outw and outwv
p. B11, lines 8-5 from end	ts plois twice should be tw ploiw ; and plois alone once should be ploiw
p. B11, line 1 from end	the unseparated uncial reading PSUAI EN TW PLOIW PSO should be PSUCHAI EN TW PLOIW SOS
p. B13, line 8 from end	lotou and loton should be logou and logon
p. B82, par. 2	apothenein should be apothanein (twice correct in same paragraph)
p. B82, lines 12 from end	Two lines of unaccented Greek appear; the remainder of the page as well as the original Burgonian text is accented.
p. B82, line 3 from end	apech should be apechei

The multitude of English and Greek errors in such a work sullies the reputation of Burgon, whose work was well-known to be most careful and meticulous throughout. The crowning irony is for so many errors to occur in a book subtitled "An Introduction to Textual Criticism" -- the science dedicated to eliminating textual errors in hand-copied or published works. This complaint alone nullifies much of the value of this book. The next area of criticism seals the point, since "scribal meddling" now enters into the picture.

II. Thoroughgoing Revision

Burgon's works, significant as they are for NT textual criticism, should simply have been republished without alteration of any kind, as had previously been done with *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark* and *The Revision Revised*. Barring that possibility, any revision should have been limited to simple abridgment rather than wholesale stylistic changes. The present work unfortunately has re-edited Burgon to such an extent that it is basically no longer Burgon who speaks but the present-day editor.

Many editorial revisions are minor, and attempt to smooth out or "improve" Burgon's writing style. But inconsistency reigns: in some places spelling is modernized, language is smoother, and punctuation is altered to current style; in other places these remain as they were or are made worse. Most editorial revisions, however, alter Burgon's original words, and cumulatively transform Burgon's unique contribution to New Testament textual criticism significantly. Burgon is clearly remolded by the hand of the editor, even to the order of his words. The following randomly selected passages dramatically demonstrate the extent of such editorial revision, with specific wording differences (but not word order) underlined:

The Causes of the Corruption, p. B1 (original p.1)

Burgon/Green:

On the one hand it has been shown that the Traditional Text must be found, not in a mere transcript, but in a laborious revision of the Received Text. And on the other hand it must be recognized that this Traditional Text will differ but slightly from the Received Text, which has been generally received during the last two and a half centuries.

Burgon/Miller:

. . . We have shewn, that on the one hand, amidst the unprecedented advantages afforded by modern conditions of life for collecting all the evidence bearing upon the subject, the Traditional Text must be found, not in a mere transcript, but in a laborious revision of the Received Text; and that on the other hand it must, as far as we can judge, differ but slightly from the Text now generally in vogue, which has been generally received during the last two and a half centuries.

The Causes of the Corruption, p. B1 (original, p.2)

Burgon/Green:

There is a considerable advantage to this small group due to the fact that numerous students refuse to look beneath the surface after deciding that the general witness is in their favor borne by the two oldest MSS. of the Gospels.

Burgon/Miller:

Not inconsiderable is the advantage possessed by that group, as regards numerous students who do not look beneath the surface, in the general witness in their favour borne by the two oldest MSS. of the Gospels in existence.

The Causes of the Corruption, p. B1, par.3 (original, p.3):

Burgon/Green:

The claim for the Text in these two oldest MSS., which were penned in the Semi-Arian period, was rejected when Semi-Arianism fell into permanent disfavor. The argument by Dr. Hort and others that the Traditional Text found in the vast majority of manuscripts was a new Text created in the fourth century has been refuted by examination of the

quotations of the Fathers in the first four centuries, and by the early Syriac and Latin Versions. Besides, these two manuscripts have been traced to a local source in the library of Caesarea.

Burgon/Miller:

The claim for the Text in them made at the Semiarian period was rejected when Semiarianism in all its phases fell into permanent disfavour. And the argument advanced by Dr. Hort that the Traditional Text was a new Text formed by successive recensions has been refuted upon examination of the verdict of the Fathers in the first four centuries, and of the early Syriac and Latin Versions. Besides all this, these two manuscripts have been traced to a local source in the library of Caesarea.

The Causes of the Corruption, p. B18 (original p.37):

Burgon/Green:

It is clear that some scribe has allowed his eye to wander from tois in line 2 to tois in line 4, and by this S. [sic] John is made to say that our Saviour Himself distributed to the 5,000. But the testimony of the MSS. proves the Received Text to be right, and moreover we are expressly assured by S. Matt. 14:19, S. Mark 6:41 and S. Luke 9:16 that dealt [sic] out the loaves to the disciples to distribute.

Burgon/Miller:

The one sufficient proof that St. John did so write, being the testimony of the MSS. Moreover, we are expressly assured by St. Matthew (xiv. 19), St. Mark (vi. 41), and St. Luke (ix. 16), that our SAVIOUR'S act was performed in this way. It is clear however that some scribe has suffered his eye to wander from tois in l.2 to tois in l.4, -- whereby St. John is made to say that our SAVIOUR himself distributed to the 5000.

The Causes of the Corruption, p. B95 (original p. 211)

Burgon/Green:

Another cause why the Text of the Gospels underwent serious depravation in ver [sic] early times was mistaken solicitude on the part of the ancient orthodox for the faith. These persons, like some modern conservatives, and like Beza, did not think it at all wrong to tamper with the inspired Text.

Burgon/Miller:

Another cause why, in very early times, the Text of the Gospels underwent serious depravation, was mistaken solicitude on the part of the ancient orthodox for the purity of the Catholic faith. These persons, like certain of the moderns, Beza for example, evidently did not think it at all wrong to tamper with the inspired Text.

Even in a relatively untouched paragraph, an urge to alter for alteration's sake appears to be felt by the editor (The Causes of the Corruption, p. B32 [original p.67]):

Burgon/Green:

The lectionaries of the ancient Church have not yet nearly enjoyed the attention they deserve, or the laborious study they absolutely require to render them practically available. Scarcely any persons except professed critics are at all acquainted with the contents of these very curious documents. And the collations of any of them have been until now effected by few indeed.

Burgon/Miller:

The lectionaries of the ancient Church have not yet nearly enjoyed the attention they deserve, or the laborious study which in order to render

them practically available they absolutely require. Scarcely any persons, in fact, except professed critics, are at all acquainted with the contents of the very curious documents alluded to: while collations of any of them which have been hitherto effected are few indeed.

Also, portions of the same book by Burgon are editorially separated throughout the volume. For example, *The Causes of the Corruption* main text appears in section B1-B103, but "Appendix 1" of that volume appears 100pp. later on pp. F1-F16, and Appendix 2 of that work appears yet another 100pp. later on pp. H1-H12. Further, on pp. B99-B100, Green transposes into the text of *The Causes of the Corruption* a two-page footnote from a different work of Burgon, solely because the same passage (Jn. 3.13) is discussed in both the *Corruption* main text and the inserted footnote. Such a procedure clearly destroys the integrity of Burgon's data as originally presented, and may introduce into later works earlier items concerning which Burgon had changed his opinion or vice versa. A close parallel to this is an instance where a significant remark of Burgon is omitted to his detriment: in *The Causes of the Corruption*, p. B83, line 6, Burgon speaks of *telos* being a "supposed nominative" at Mark 14.41. The original edition had here a very important footnote by Burgon which is totally omitted in Green's edition: I retract unreservedly what I offered on this subject in a former work (*Last Twelve Verses, &c.*, pp. 225, 226). I was misled by one who seldom indeed misleads, -- the learned editor of the *Codex Bezae* (in loco).

Burgon here not only retracts a previous statement uttered in 1871, but also declares that Scrivener (the editor of *Bezae*) had then misled him on the point at issue. Why such a significant note should have been omitted is curious, especially with the chronologically earlier *The Last Twelve Verses according to the Gospel of S. Mark* included later in the present volume, with the "misleading" material standing therein unaltered and uncorrected (pp. C123-C125).

In at least one place, the manuscript evidence is unwittingly altered by editorial fiat. On p. B99, center, Green misrepresents Burgon as speaking of "five [sic] uncials of bad character (Aleph B L T)." However, the fourth (and last) MS mentioned should be Tb, which was neither a corrector of the modern uncial designated as T (number 029 of the 5th century) nor related to that manuscript at all. Burgon followed Scrivener's and Tischendorf's designations of MSS (then current), and Tb represented a different uncial altogether, the modern 083 of the 6th-7th century. The MS evidence thus has been unnecessarily distorted by the present editor.

Edward F. Hills fares no better in his own "Introduction," which was prefaced originally to Green's 1959 reprint of Burgon's *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark*. Hills is reworked even more than Burgon; in many places to Hills' detriment. The same disregard for the original integrity of authors is clearly seen there as well.

Despite the result, this work should not have appeared like the editorial product of a newspaper "boiler room," but should accurately have reflected the life's work of the scholars in question. Respect for the integrity of any author should restrain the wholesale re-editing of that person's work. It is commonly accepted in academic circles that any and all changes (if needed) should be minimal. Instead, one finds an indiscriminate revision of almost everything Burgon has to say throughout the

volume. While the voice might be Burgon's, the hands are those of Green; and it does not serve the reader well to think he is reading the unvarnished words of Burgon (at times as originally edited by Miller) when in fact he is not.

In addition to the continual rewriting of these authors' works, editorial comments by Green often intrude upon the narrative, most of these marked by square brackets []. Such editorial comments, where absolutely necessary, could have been placed in a footnote instead of within the main text. These comments are generally superfluous, and merely attempt to "update" Burgon relative to modern translations or refer the reader to other sections of the volume). Yet more significant "update" material is left unstated (e.g., places where later discoveries have shown some of Burgon's contentions to be in error, such as papyrus 75 and the date of origin of the Alexandrian texttype). Also, since Miller (Burgon's original editor) also uses the square brackets, the reader often cannot tell whether the comment is that of Green or Miller.

Further, some of Miller's editorial remarks are deliberately omitted. For example, Traditional Text, p.23, par.3, end, where Miller's critique of Burgon, "[This is, I think, too strong . . .]," is omitted. In other places, the original editorial brackets have disappeared altogether (e.g., p. B70, where the last, non-bracketed paragraph is purely an editorial insertion by Miller. In that same place, Green leaves out a significant comment of Miller, and adds his own and quite different conclusion (specific wording differences underlined):

Burgon/Green:

The fact is, omissions are much more common than additions, or transpositions, or substitutions. And this fact, that omissions are apparently so common, and that they at times are attested with seemingly strong evidence, cannot but confirm the general soundness of the contention that the preponderance of evidence must be consulted in each case.

Burgon/Miller:

In fact, omissions are much more common than Additions, or Transpositions, or Substitutions: and this fact, that omissions, or what seem to be omissions, are apparently so common, -- to say nothing of the very strong evidence wherewith they are attested -- when taken in conjunction with the natural tendency of copyists to omit words and passages, cannot but confirm the general soundness of the position.

The best course, as already stated, would have been to reproduce Burgon's words exactly as they left his or Miller's hand, without adding any new editorial comments or excising older ones. As it is, in this revision one has moved a good distance from the Burgonian "originals" into a form equalling that so strongly criticized by Burgon, such as that which the ancient orthodox had done to the Traditional Text. As Burgon states (Traditional Text, original edition, p.211),

If any expression seemed to them to have a dangerous tendency, they altered it, or transplanted it, or removed it bodily from the sacred page. About the uncritical nature of what they did, they entertained no suspicion: about the immorality of the proceeding, they evidently did not trouble themselves at all. On the contrary, the piety of the motive seems to have been held to constitute a sufficient excuse for any amount of licence. So it is with the present work (even in this passage, Green's text alters "bodily" to

"completely" and changes "about the immorality . . . at all" into "They evidently did not trouble themselves at all about the immorality of their proceedings"). Green thus illuminates Burgon's own point: pious motives do not in themselves make a work "better," especially when connected with wide-ranging "scribal error" and recensional activity.

III. Introductory Invective

Last of all, the "Foreword" added by Green eradicates whatever semblance of fairness remains concerning an open-minded scholarly reconsideration of Burgon's "Traditional Text" hypothesis. The Foreword relies so heavily on the "theological argument" concerning the providential preservation of the NT text that one would wonder before reading Burgon whether there is any scholarly case that could be made for the Majority Text hypothesis.

As a rule, any appeal to the "theological argument" for a specific text or version is basically weak and circular, and ungermane to the basic issue of the real providential preservation of all manuscript data. In the logical extreme, a primary reliance upon this criterion forces one to adopt a single "perfect" Greek text and English version, as declared by personal or outside-imposed fiat. In a properly-balanced methodology (followed by Burgon himself), one should maintain that it is in the aggregate consentient testimony of all textual witnesses -good as well as bad -- that one finds preserved providentially the data necessary whereby to establish the near-autograph NT text. As Burgon states in his original Traditional Text volume (p.30; Green's edition, p.16),

So far from regarding the whole body of ancient authorities as untrustworthy, it is precisely "the whole body of ancient authorities" to which I insist that we must invariably make our appeal, and to which we must eventually defer. I regard them therefore with more than reverence. I submit to their decision unreservedly.

Different scholars obviously interpret that mass of evidence differently, as might be expected; but conservative scholars can still remain orthodox regardless of which text or version they favor, and need not be calumniated as "liberals" or "unbelievers" for such decisions. The worst thing any "Majority" or "Traditional Text" partisans can do is to declare that they alone possess the "true text," and then make acceptance of that text a test of theological or text-critical "orthodoxy." Curious outsiders will never respond positively to such non-essential dogmatism; a gentle and scholarly persuasion is the only proper course in matters of textual theory. Green himself clearly reveals the problem when he severely ridicules the orthodox Calvinist B. B. Warfield for maintaining the "providential preservation" argument in favor of the Westcott-Hort text ("Foreword," pp. 10, 14):

Warfield even foolishly wrote that the providence of God was operating through Westcott and Hort to rescue and restore the true Text of the New Testament.

.....

How could B. B. Warfield, and others since, regard Westcott and Hort as providentially chosen instruments to restore the Text of Scripture, when it is known [!] that these two men were obviously not chosen to eternal life . . . ?

Although the latter question as to how unbelievers could yet fulfill God's purposes could be adequately answered in sound theological terms (e.g., applying the

principle of Rom. 9.17 or Isa. 10.5), this would not resolve the dilemma. As his final question suggests, Green imitates the extremist pamphleteers and presses far beyond most other Majority/Byzantine Text defenders in his case for "providential preservation." He utilizes a mass of invective and misinformation calculated to discredit Westcott and Hort on every ground other than a sound critical opposition to the theory they espoused. The ad hominem arguments which abound hinder rather than help attain the desired goal. The language is highly intemperate and abusive, and unworthy to introduce a gentleman and scholar such as Burgon.

Westcott and Hort (as British Anglicans during the mid-19th century period of theological upheaval in that denomination) are charged with heresy concerning their having "talked of a ransom being paid to Satan" in regard to the Atonement, questioning the issue of purgatory as well as the infallibility of the Scriptures, denying total depravity, questioning the issue of "Christ as 'the believer's God,'" holding that "God's wrath was subservient to his mercy," and denying the historical nature of the Fall of Man, etc. (p. 7). Some of these concerns are still debated today, even among theological conservatives.

It may be all well and good to discuss 19th-century Anglican heresy. However, one cannot feign ignorance regarding the fact that Burgon himself was a contemporary British High Church Anglican caught up in the Puseyite Anglo-Catholic revival movement. Burgon believed not only in the baptismal regeneration of infants, the holy orders of Anglican priesthood, and the sacramental value of the Anglican mass, but also in private confession, priestly absolution and a revival of the monastic life (Burgon remained celibate all his life). The effect of the Puseyite movement on biblical criticism, resulted, however, in a strict exegetical conservatism in reaction to the "new liberalism," and fervently combated such liberalism as destructive of "Church authority." Pusey's principle of revelation as interpreted by the "historic authority of the Church" in fact underlies all of Burgon's textual theory.

Just because one does not accept five-point Calvinism or Baptist principles and (especially) does not accept the Majority/Byzantine/Traditional text, this does not provide sufficient ground for sweeping charges of heresy, liberalism, or "guilt by association." Especially does this vituperation not settle the textual question one way or the other. Burgon's literary executor, Edward Miller, admitted that his own High Church views "mellowed" under the liberal "Oxford Movement" of that same era (Traditional Text, original Preface, p. xi, omitted in Green's volume). If this be so, then Miller is guilty of "heresy" similar to that of Westcott and Hort; yet he is faithfully relied upon to give us Burgon's posthumous works.

The worst charge laid upon Westcott and Hort, however, is also the most utterly false charge ever raised, namely, that they were "closet Roman Catholics." This is the more striking in view of Burgon's own High Church Anglo-Catholicism. This "Catholic conspiracy" charge against Westcott and Hort has been bandied about ever since David Otis Fuller produced *Which Bible?*, relying primarily upon the Seventh-Day Adventist propagandist Benjamin Wilkinson to "vindicate" the Authorized Version. Green reiterates some of the same propaganda ("Foreword," p. 7):

The charge of idolatry is much clearer in the case of Westcott and Hort. For both were worshippers of Mary, and they traveled here and there to attend Mariolatry events (as revealed in the biography of Hort by his son. Hort wrote to Westcott, "I have been

persuaded for many years that Mary-worship and Jesus-worship have very much in common in their causes and their results." (Life and Letters of Fenton F. J. A. Hort [sic], A. F. Hort, Vol. II., p.50 -- a letter written Oct. 17, 1865).

The reader is urged to check Hort's quote in context personally. He or she then will easily see that the issue under discussion was "why do the Catholics worship Mary?" and not "why I worship Mary." Neither did Westcott and Hort ever "travel here and there to attend Mariolatry events" -- as Burgon would say, this is pure "moonshine." Often mentioned in this regard (but not by Green) is Westcott's mention of kneeling before a crucifix, conveniently omitting Westcott's closing phrase, "I wish it had been a cross." All such out-of-context charges of secret Romanism against Westcott and Hort are baseless, yet these have been elevated into "fact" by anti-Alexandrian extremists. Even a "Christian comic book" (Jack Chick's Sabotage! Holy Bible!) makes Westcott and Hort into "secret Jesuits" who infiltrated the Anglican church, solely to re-edit the original TR into an Alexandrian text and then to re-translate the New Testament on that basis. They had plotted thereby to give the Protestant world a "Catholic Bible"! How absurd such charges are should be obvious. The Life and Letters volumes of both Westcott and Hort, edited by their sons, show clearly how shocked both Westcott and Hort were at John Henry Newman's defection to Roman Catholicism, as well as their opposition to Romanist dogma and superstition.

It should be noted that nowhere in his volumes does Burgon say anything derogatory about the personae or religious views of Westcott and Hort -- only their textual theory is criticized, and that from a popularized but scholarly stance. Nowhere does Burgon ever charge Westcott or Hort with any heresy whatsoever, and such a tactic muddies the text-critical question needlessly.

A calm, scientific approach must prevail whenever textual theory is examined or discussed; anything else detracts, and turns scholarly inquiry into a jingoistic circus (which is what Green's unfortunate Foreword in this case has done). Throughout the Foreword, charges of "unbelief" inundate the reader, not only attacking Westcott and Hort, but smearing all NT scholars who would choose to follow a non-Majority text on what they consider sound principles. While one may readily acknowledge that Hort was a "liberal" Anglican, to make the conservative Anglican Westcott (whose commentaries are praised by Spurgeon) into a similar liberal arch-heretic simply plays fast and loose with the facts. Yet Green writes, "Westcott shared many if not all of Hort's views. Especially did he agree as to the worship of Mary, and of infallibility," p.7). Even the final statement of Green's Foreword rehashes the "Catholic Connection": one must reject Westcott and Hort's Alexandrian text because "no worshipper of Mary can be admitted into heaven" (p.15).

Somewhere it seems forgotten that orthodox and conservative Christians in the 19th century accepted with eyes wide open a text paralleling that of Westcott and Hort -- not only B. B. Warfield, but Samuel P. Tregelles, and even Spurgeon himself, who accepted the "better readings" of the English 1881 Revised Version, based essentially upon the Westcott-Hort Text. Conversely, in 1940 the Roman Catholic scholar (and Mariolator!) Hugh Pope confidently affirmed that in matters of text he was a committed Burgonite. Yet Green praises Majority Text supporters as "orthodox" and excoriates all non-Majority text persons as immersed in "unbelief" -- a strange situation indeed.

Green justifies his harsh language on the ground that he has not "been

initiated into the 'scholar's union' -- or the 'priesthood of scholars'" (which he interprets as those unwilling to say anything critical about anyone or their theories, since otherwise "nothing they say will be given any notice"). Green rather appeals only to the "good-hearted, every-day Christians" (p.14), whom he assumes will immediately agree with all he says. The nature and tone of what is stated belies this supposition, however, since the whole Foreword is a direct attack against any and all who would say the least good about an Alexandrian MS or modern critical texts or translations. Green overlooks the fact that the NIV, based upon an Alexandrian text, is now the best-selling Bible translation, and that the majority of these "good-hearted, every-day Christians" seem to have no qualms about using that text. If this "Bible-buying majority" of Christians so acted out of "factual ignorance," how can they be expected to accept passionate invective as a substitute for calm and scholarly formal discussion? Yet this is the entire theme of the Foreword, and ties in directly with Green's original title: Unholy Hands on the Bible (complete with a definition of "unholy" on p.1).

The facts are plain: in the 19th century text-critical preference was never a test of orthodoxy, and should not be today. The modern insistence by fundamentalist extremists on a particular Greek texttype as an absolute authority began in earnest only during the last thirty years, gaining momentum only because conservative scholars began producing translations which could no longer be summarily dismissed as the emaciated theological product of religious "liberals." The "Majority/Textus Receptus" issue took hold among the extremist groups only because the Byzantine Textform happened basically to underlie the King James Version which these groups favored; this in opposition to the "liberal" and modern conservative translations, which were based upon a critical (Alexandrian) text. Had a text differing from that of the majority of manuscripts been the basis of the KJV, the textual issue as currently propagandized would never have been raised by these extremists, but another case based upon "special providential preservation" would have taken its place. For present-day evangelicals, Paul's statement, "Let each one be fully convinced in his own mind" (Rom. 14.5) must equally apply to the current textual issue as well as to those "doubtful matters" mentioned in Paul's original context. The believer-priest of today remains fully capable of dispensing with rumors and allegations, of examining all the facts, and then determining the needful truths concerning this important question before his own Master and Lord .

In effect, all textual critics, Majority supporters as well as others, fall under Green's condemnation, simply because they recognize that the NT Greek text should be altered in certain places, as determined by various principles of textual criticism. Logically, the only way to avoid this problem would be to possess by dogmatic decree a single inerrant Greek text as well as a single inerrant English text -- i.e., the position of the extremist TR/KJV defenders. Yet Green cannot hold to such a view since he freely has altered both texts in his own revision of the New Testament (King James II). The remaining question is only by what method and to what extent one may proceed in restoring the Greek text and re-wording or translating the English; but that is a completely different issue from Green's presently stated theological controversy, which is hardly identical to that of Burgon.

There are a few additional problems, which pale beside what has already

been mentioned. These include the following:

The Index is limited to Scripture references, and these are by no means complete. The original general indices of persons, places and subjects has been totally eliminated, making that useful portion of Burgon's works unavailable to the modern reader.

Footnotes for the most part have been eliminated. The editor has presumed that most of these were "too technical for the average reader" (p.38). Yet one must wonder: if Prebendary Miller (Burgon's original editor) did not think they were unnecessary, why should any later editor? Also, with the vast amount of Greek being cited throughout the work, with no translation given in most instances, why should the "technical incompetency" of the intended reader be so presumed? On p. C127, Burgon cites seven lines of Eusebius' patristic Greek, with no translation provided the reader. In view of this and other Greek-related matters, it certainly appears foolish to excuse one's excision of scholarly footnotes as "too technical" for the intended audience.

Without the footnotes (which are mostly "to support quotations by Burgon," and therefore important for verification and further research), the reader is forced to do what Green actually suggests (p.38):

It was decided to refer the reader to the original volumes if there is need to look up the sources of the quotations. Most good theological libraries will have Burgon's works. If such be the case, then one is obviously better advised to photocopy the original works from such libraries rather than use this half-hearted misrepresentation of Burgon's writings. The footnotes that remain are designated as "valuable" in Green's opinion: but why must a person rely upon Green and not Burgon or Miller to determine what is valuable for one's own purposes.

Also annoying is the use of large bold type for B (Codex Vaticanus) throughout, as well as all Greek words. Other uncial MSS such as C, D, and L, as well as Aleph, are not so typified. The boldface stands out far too much for a work of this caliber, and disfigures the page. Burgon's original works used a pleasing typeface throughout in both English and Greek -- another reason why a simple reprint of Burgon would have been better.

Finally, the entitling of the closing section (pp. G2-G63) as "The Secret Spanking of Westcott and Hort" is juvenile. The excerpts in that section are from The Revision Revised, and should simply have been grouped together with the other portions of that book (e.g., pp. D1-D51). The "Spanking" phrase actually had been the original working title for this entire volume in pre-publication advertisements going back to the 1970s. The substitution of "Unholy Hands on the Bible" does not improve the matter. The book should simply have been entitled The Collected Works of John W. Burgon on the Text of the New Testament. Also, with over 15 years of planning and preparation for this volume, one would have thought that a better and more complete presentation of Burgon's works would have resulted, including extracts from his Inspiration and Interpretation volume, his Treatise on the Pastoral Office, and especially his Textual Commentary, which shows Burgon's preferred Traditional/Majority alterations to the TR of Matthew 1-14 (which almost identically parallel those of Hodges/Farstad and the present writer).

In sum, this could have been an excellent book, and if well-indexed,

extremely useful for ready-reference within Majority Text circles. The primary problems of a bitter, vituperative "Introduction"; the wholesale revision of almost everything Burgon has to say; and the extreme mass of errors riddling this publication make it unacceptable to anyone who respects Burgon and the theory he espoused. One can only hope for and await a complete hardbound reprint of all of Burgon's text-critical works unabridged, with no editorial comment. There is a market for such works, if done properly. Publishers, are you listening?